

July 28, 1959

MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT
July 27, 1959

Others present:

Secretary Dillon
General Goodpaster



The President had before him a series of messages and dispatches, including a report from the Vice President, a long letter from Macmillan, and several messages from Mr. Herter reflecting the situation in Geneva. He spoke particularly of Macmillan's letter, proposing that the President call a summit meeting at the end of August or the first of September. The President said he saw no reason why he should propose a summit meeting. Long ago he and Macmillan had agreed that the Foreign Ministers should work out those plans.

In response to a question by Mr. Dillon, the President agreed that he could advise Secretary Herter that he could mention the discussions concerning an exchange of visits with Khrushchev to Couve de Murville -- telling him only that the President has had an exploratory exchange with Khrushchev, but not going into full detail.

The President noted that Macmillan's letter seems

DECLASSIFIED WITH DELETIONS

E.O. 12958, SEC. 1.4(b)

NSC F90-1023

90-300-12

7/31/91

PC

to be drafted on the premise that Gromyko will accept the Western offer of June sixteenth. Of course, if he does that, and the Ministers agree on proposals as to how to advance reunification, then there would be the basis for a summit meeting. He recalled that he had asked Secretary Dulles and Mr. Herter as well what harm would be done to us if the Soviets were to make a peace treaty with East Germany. He did not see that this would harm important U. S. interests.

The President commented that we seem to be getting close to the point of being forced to have a summit meeting. Mr. Dillon recalled that the idea of the State Department people originally was that Khrushchev should visit for a few days just ahead of a summit meeting in Quebec. He saw as a possible line of action announcing before holding the meeting with Khrushchev that a summit meeting would be held some time later this year.





The President asked Mr. Dillon and Mr. Murphy, taking the June sixteenth statement as a starting point, to work up a plan providing that until the start of 1962 there would be no change in Berlin except as unanimously agreed, and trying to spell out an agreement on how to go ahead on the question of German reunification -- perhaps having the Foreign Ministers meet every six months with German advisers present, having other countries as well join the meeting once a year -- such countries as Italy, Czechoslovakia and Poland. Perhaps a package of this kind could be accepted by the Soviets.

Mr. Dillon said it really looks as though to meet Macmillan's proposal, the only way Khrushchev could make his visit prior to the summit meeting would be for him to come about August 15th, having the summit meeting on August 25th. The President said that Macmillan has apparently fixed a date in the last week of October for the election, and is now caught by these dates. Mr. Dillon recalled also the Vice President's report that Khrushchev had said he wants to have a vacation in August. The President added that Khrushchev had stressed he does not wish to come in hot weather.

Mr. Dillon said he has the impression that something is about to come out from the Russians at Geneva, and, if so, this might be a better light on the whole situation. The President said one other possibility would be to have Khrushchev stay for a few days after a summit meeting that might begin on August 25th. We would be very much in difficulty, however, if the summit meeting did not develop satisfactorily.

The President suggested that Mr. Dillon tell Mr. Herter that Macmillan's note seems to put us in a difficult spot. On the one hand we do not have any assurance of the progress necessary to justify a summit meeting. On the other, he makes the summit meeting prerequisite and preliminary to bilateral talks with Khrushchev. The President commented that he certainly does not want to do anything that would prejudice Macmillan's position in his election.

The President concluded by asking Mr. Dillon what he would have to do with Khrushchev in terms of state functions, should the latter come. Specifically, would he have to give a dinner for him. Mr. Dillon said that technically that might not be necessary, since Khrushchev is not a Chief of State, but practically he did not see how it could be avoided. The President also commented that in effect Khrushchev is the Chief of State of Russia.



A. J. Goodpaster
Brigadier General, USA